

**St. Marys Downtown Development Authority (DDA)**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Meeting Minutes for April 15, 2014

The meeting of the St. Marys DDA was called to order by Straight at 8:30 am.

**Members Present:** Bill Bruce, Charlie Smith, Jim Lomis, Gary Straight, Cheri Richter, Councilman Dave Reilly, and Terry Landreth

**Members not Present:**

**Guest in attendance:** Councilman Sam Colville

**Staff:** Renée Coakley; Executive Assistant

Straight began the meeting by introducing the newly appointed board member Mr. William Bruce. Mr. Bruce gave a brief synopsis of his past employments.

**Minutes:** The board reviewed the March 10, 2014 meeting minutes. Richter noted that a change should be made to note that the Camden Partnership organized the CNO visit not Team Camden. Motion to approve the minutes with the noted change was made by Smith and seconded by Reilly. All were in favor.

**Treasurers Report:** Smith presented the financials for the month. Question was asked when the committee should meet to review the budget for the DDA and Reilly noted that the budget hearings were about to take place. Straight will speak with the Interim City Manager about the Economic Development budget. Motion to approve the financials was made by Smith and seconded by Lomis. All were in favor of approving the financials.

**Additions to the Agenda:** The following were added to the agenda: Guide to Camden County by Renée, move to shared facilities in the North Center by Straight and Georgia Leadership Event on May 9<sup>th</sup> by Straight.

**BUSINESS DISCUSSION:**

**St. Marys Redevelopment Act Support Letter:** Smith presented a letter that was created by the Chamber and approved at a recent meeting in support of the St. Marys Redevelopment Act. Straight endorsed the letter and asked if the DDA should co-write this letter for presentation. Lomis made a motion which was seconded by Richter for the DDA to co-write this letter. Discussion was had whether it would be stronger for the DDA to create a separate letter. It was proposed that the DDA and IDA co-write a letter of support. Straight will discuss this with the IDA chair and develop a letter if agreed upon. This letter will be sent to the Tribune and Georgian as a letter to the editor. Motion was revised to submit a separate letter from the Chamber by Reilly and seconded by Lomis. All were in favor. It was suggested that Straight look into presenting this letter on KBay as well and Lomis suggested having info placed on one of Vista Advertising's digital boards. Lomis will speak with Craig Root about the billboard advertising.

**Team Camden:** Renée reported on three events the group is working on: the Community That Cares luncheon, GA Leadership Day on May 9<sup>th</sup> and the Coast Guard Community Picnic on May 17<sup>th</sup>. Straight discussed the MOU that was presented a few months back about the co-locating

of the Economic Development entities in the county to the North Center building on HWY 17 in Kingsland. The group has provided St. Marys access and the DDA felt that although a presence would be ideal at that location as well, if hired, the new Economic Development Director would be best served with an office in St. Marys.

**St. Marys Intracoastal Gateway (SMIG):** Straight reported that the committee met last week and currently has no new developments. The Forum group visited recently with some of their staff to view the property to better advertise it.

**Maritime Heritage District (MHD):** Richter reported that nothing has changed.

**Historic Tree Trail:** Richter reported that the city approved \$15,000 matching funds to move forward with the grant proposal. The text is currently being written for signs. Cost estimates for trash receptacles, benches and pathway materials have been obtained.

**Economic Development Committee:** Lomis reported that there will be a meeting held in May to redirect the focus of this group. Currently two focus forums have been conducted. The committee is working with a program at the high school and will eventually invite restaurant owners to discuss programs that would aid in enhancing customer experience at local restaurants which was a consensus of a problem on the surveys.

**GA Leadership Event:** Straight spoke about this event that will take place on May 9<sup>th</sup> in the Howard Gilman Waterfront Park. This is a statewide program for civic minded high potentials/future business leaders. The group will visit St. Marys on this date for lunch in the park and a visit to Cumberland Island.

**Wayfinding:** Renée reported that the Interim City Manager is working with Kingsland Economic Development on closing out this process. It was approved at a recent Council Meeting for the Interim City Manager to sign the necessary documents to proceed.

**Guide to Camden:** Renée reported that it is time for submittal of the ad for the Guide to Camden County that will soon be in production by the Chamber and Tribune and Georgian. The board agreed to advertise again in the upcoming edition and Richter agreed to review the current ad to see if it needs updating. Motion to approve the ad as written or as amended by Richter was made by Lomis and seconded by Bruce. All were in favor.

## **DIRECTORS REPORT**

**Businesses and Updates:** The Interim City Manager was not available so nothing was reported.

**Adjourn** – Meeting adjourned at 9:30 am with motion by Smith and second by Bruce. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 12<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am.

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Charlie Smith, Secretary

Prepared by Renée Coakley, Executive Assistant